

Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA

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§ 1468.33 Performance based upon advice or action of representatives of CCC.

If a participant relied upon the advice or action of any authorized representative of CCC, and did not know or have reason to know that the action or advice was improper or erroneous, the FSA county committee, in consultation with NRCS, may accept the advice or action as meeting the requirements of the program and may grant relief, to the extent it is deemed desirable, to provide a fair and equitable treatment because of the good-faith reliance on the part of the participant.

§ 1468.34 Offsets and assignments.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, any payment or portion thereof to any participant shall be made without regard to questions of title under State law and without regard to any claim or lien against the crop, or proceeds thereof, in favor of the owner or any other creditor except agencies of the United States. The regulations governing offsets and withholdings found at part 1403 of this chapter shall apply to contract payments.

(b) Any participant entitled to any payment may assign any payments in accordance with regulations governing assignment of payment found at part 1404 of this chapter.

§ 1468.35 Misrepresentation and scheme or device.

(a) A participant who is determined to have erroneously represented any fact affecting a program determination made in accordance with this part shall not be entitled to contract payments and must refund to CCC all payments, plus interest determined in accordance with part 1403 of this chapter.

(b) An applicant or participant who is determined to have knowingly adopted any scheme or device that tends to defeat the purpose of the program; made any fraudulent representation; or misrepresented any fact affecting a program determination, shall refund to CCC all payments, plus interest determined in accordance with part 1403 of this chapter, received by such appli-

cant or participant with respect to CFO contracts.

PART 1469—CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM

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AUTHORITY: 16 U.S.C. 3830 *et seq.*

SOURCE: 69 FR 34522, June 21, 2004, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 1469.1 Applicability.

(a) This part sets forth the policies, procedures, and requirements for the Conservation Security Program (CSP) as administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for enrollment during calendar year 2004 and thereafter.

(b) CSP is applicable only on privately owned or Tribal lands in any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,

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Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(c) Through the CSP the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), by and through the NRCS, provides financial assistance and technical assistance to participants for the conservation, protection, and improvement of soil, water, and other related resources, and for any similar conservation purpose as determined by the Secretary.

§ 1469.2 Administration.

(a) The regulations in this part will be administered under the general supervision and direction of the Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), who is a Vice President of the CCC.

(b) The Chief may modify or waive a provision of this part if the Chief determines that the application of such provision to a particular limited situation is inappropriate and inconsistent with the goals of the program.

(c) The Chief determines fund availability to provide financial and technical assistance to participants according to the purpose and projected cost of contracts in a fiscal year. The Chief allocates the funds available to carry out CSP to the NRCS State Conservationist. Contract obligations will not exceed the funding available to the Agency.

(d) The State Conservationist may obtain advice from the State Technical Committee and local workgroups on the development of State program technical policies, payment related matters, outreach efforts, and other program issues.

(e) NRCS may enter into agreements with Federal agencies, State and local agencies, conservation districts, Tribes, private entities, and individuals to assist NRCS with educational efforts, outreach efforts, and program implementation assistance.

(f) For lands under the jurisdiction of a Tribe or Tribal Nation, certain items identified in paragraph (d) of this section may be determined by the Tribe or Tribal Nation and the NRCS Chief.

§ 1469.3 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to this part and all documents issued in accordance with this part, unless specified otherwise:

Activity means an action other than a conservation practice that is included as a part of a conservation stewardship contract; such as a measure, incremental movement on a conservation index or scale, or an on-farm demonstration, pilot, or assessment.

Agricultural land means cropland, rangeland, pastureland, hayland, private non-industrial forest land if it is an incidental part of the agricultural operation, and other land on which food, fiber, and other agricultural products are produced. Areas used for strip-cropping or alley-cropping and silvopasture practices will be included as agricultural land.

Agricultural operation means all agricultural land and other lands determined by the Chief, whether contiguous or noncontiguous, under the control of the participant and constituting a cohesive management unit, that is operated with equipment, labor, accounting system, and management that is substantially separate from any other. The minimum size of an agricultural operation is a field.

Applicant means a producer as defined in this rule who has requested in writing to participate in CSP.

Beginning farmer or rancher means an individual or entity who:

(1) Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years, as defined in (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)). This requirement applies to all members of an entity; and

(2) Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.

(i) In the case of a contract with an individual, solely, or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located.

(ii) In the case of a contract with an entity, all members must materially